

# OpenTheo

## Gospel in Eschatology: The Parable of the Mustard Seed

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### For The King - Rocky Ramsey

Bryce and I continue to describe how the gospel goes to the ends of the earth through a postmillennial understanding of eschatology. We look particularly at what the bible teaches about the kingdom of God this episode. We pray and hope it edifies you! For The King!!!

#### Key Texts:

\* Matthew 13:31-33

\* Ezekiel 17:22-24

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## Transcript

(music) Don't think I will even ask you to make Jesus Lord of your life. That's the most preposterous thing I could ever tell you to do. Jesus Christ is Lord of your life.

Whether you serve him or not, whether you bless him, curse him, hate him, or love him, he is the Lord of your life because God has given him a name that is above every name so that the name of Jesus Christ every knee shall bow and tongue confess that he is Lord. Some of you will bow out of the grace that has been given to you and others will bow because your kneecaps will be broken by the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron. And I'll not apologize for this God of the Bible.

(music) Hey friends, welcome to the For the King podcast where we proclaim the edicts of the king, namely and chiefly, that Yahweh reigns. Thanks for joining us today. On the For the King podcast, I am joined with my brother Bryce, my co-host for these Sunday episodes.

Hey Bryce. Hello. What's up, bub? What's cracking? Dude, not a whole lot.

Just looking forward to this topic that we're on. Yeah. Talk more about post-mill eschatology and how that factors in with the gospel, the proclamation of the gospel, how it helps us think about how the gospel goes forth.

It gives us a paradigm that the gospel is fitting into, this growth of the kingdom, this dominion growth, establishment of Christ's kingdom. So, yeah, it's beautiful to learn about this, to talk about it. This is God's word.

We're not just basing it off of man's thoughts. See how excited to get into this today. Do you have any kind of precursor thoughts to set the stage or should we just go right into the text? Yeah, I mean, we've only done one episode so far.

We're pretty much talking about the theology of dominion or the theology of post-millennialism, this optimism. That's kind of what we were talking about last episode, just to recap. The Great Commission talks about Jesus having all authority and having it on earth.

And this passage we're going to read today is really just an expression of that authority. Yeah. So, yeah, let's go and get into the text, then.

Okay. So, the main text we're looking at today is we're going to read out of Matthew 13, and we're going to do 31 until 33. So, it reads as such, Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it

is the greatest among herbs and become at the tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Another parable spake he unto them. The kingdom of heaven is like unto eleven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leaven. The Kingdom of Heaven is so beautiful.

That was, that actually is, I just started kind of reading it more, and I'm starting to get what you mean, Bryce, and how beautiful the language is. Yeah. But, okay, so what's going on in this parable? We have Jesus giving us two different teachings that are like each other.

They go in a pair together in terms of what they're articulating. Jesus gives us some interpretive principles embedded in the text of what he's talking about here. He says the kingdom of heaven is like this.

So, he's using a simile. He's saying this is like this, and then he's comparing two things. So, the first thing he compares the kingdom of heaven to is this mustard seed, a mustard tree.

And he highlights, you know, when we're going to learn, as we're learning about the kingdom, what does he highlight about the nature of that seed, some kind of physical thing that God made. He highlights that this is a very small seed. It's the least of all seeds.

It's extremely small, but when it's grown, it's actually the greatest of all the herbs. It becomes a great tree, and many animals reside in it. So, what do you think that's teaching us, Bryce? You know, why is he saying it's small, it grows large? What is that teaching us about the kingdom of God? Yeah, I would say two things with that.

First off, this comes on the heels of the parable of the wheat and the tares, where Jesus concludes that there's two things. He plants wheat seeds into this field, and some evil wicked servants come in. They sneak in, and they also plant tares beside it.

And now they both start growing together, and the servants come to the master, and they say, like, "Look, there's tares here. What should we do?" And he says, "Let them both grow together, and in the harvest I will gather together both of them." Yeah. Essentially is what he's saying.

So, Jesus, if we would take that and understand that both of them grow at the same exponential rate, unless we would misunderstand that and think that they both grow at the exact same rate, the exact same time, the exact same volume, he's going to give us this parable to help balance our mindset when we're viewing the kingdom. So, yes, they both grow together, but the volume of the growth, Jesus says, and this parable, what is this kingdom of heaven like? It's like a mustard seed. It's the smallest in the field, right?

It's the smallest of all the seeds that you plant, and yet it grows and becomes one of the largest trees.

Yeah. And the second point that I wouldn't see here is that this is progressive. The kingdom of God is not something that arrives out of nowhere.

It's not something that arrives out of the snap of the finger. Yeah. The kingdom of God is something which is progressive.

It's taking time. You're waiting the season until the harvest. It's something that is not immediate.

The kingdom of God is never immediate. It is something that takes time, like it does for a tree to grow up. It's not something that you're planning a tree.

If you ever even just planted an herb, these things take time. Yeah. So we see, yeah, first off, we shouldn't misunderstand and think that the kingdom of God grows at the same volume as the king of this world, the king of Satan.

But at the same time, we need to recognize this progressive element that the kingdom of God vastly outgrows the kingdom of darkness. While still maintaining, there is tears being grown in the world. We're not saying everything's going to be perfect.

We're not saying the kingdom of God is going to never have any rough spots where maybe there's some weeds growing in part of the field. Right. Yeah.

So we got to maintain all the teaching here. But I agree with you, Bryce. We have to realize Jesus is clarifying what the wheat field is going to be like.

It's going to be mainly wheat. It's going to grow and then it's going to become a tree that shades out all the other trees and they'll die. The trees die because there's not enough sunlight for them to survive.

And then all the animals make their nests and live in that tree. So I think that's really important. You know, thinking about the patience there, there's a like you said, there's a measure of patience, patience, waiting for something to grow, waiting for something to bear fruit.

We got to remember that in the kingdom of God, Jesus is obviously very patient. He has a plan. He knows how his kingdom is going to unfold.

So we should be patient with him while plodding along and working the ground that he's laid out for us to work, which kind of piggybacks nicely off of what we talked about last week with the Great Commission. The Great Commission is the work, you know, is the fruit born out of this tree, you know? So as it gets bigger, it'll continually drop more fruit and it'll drop more seeds and it'll scat, you know, so. And so we also wanted to highlight

here, guys, that Jesus isn't just teaching this out of nowhere.

This actually comes out of the Old Testament. So we always use scripture to interpret scripture. So let's look at Ezekiel 17, 22 through 24.

There's a few instances in the Old Testament when there is a large tree being grown. Bryce just taught out of a, what was that, Daniel 4? It was Daniel 4. We see many instances of large trees growing and, you know, fowl and birds nesting in the canopy. But here's the specific one, the more specific one Christ has in mind, because this is talking about the kingdom of God and not Nebuchadnezzar.

So Ezekiel 17, 22 through 24. "Thus saith the Lord, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar and will set it, and will set it. I will crop off the top of his young twigs, a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent.

In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it, and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit and be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing, and the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish. I the Lord have spoken and have done it." So Jesus is harkening on obviously his own words here in Ezekiel of what God was going to do with Israel, how he was going to.

They were a low tree. They were a low beaker tree in terms of the kingdoms of the world. They were continuing to be judged by God.

But God says, "I'm going to cut down that tree." Right. So keep, keep, uh, "Marrying fruit with repentance," as John the Baptist says. And he says, "Even now the axe is laid to the root." So that tree is lopped off.

But the remnant, right, the true Israel was always there. And that, that tree, that kingdom of God, remnant true Israel is what grows here. That's the kingdom of God.

Right. So Jesus is teaching, you know, that there's going to be a tree, a tree that's been low, that's been slowly growing through all of history, which was Israel, right? The true Israel. And he says, "I'm going to take that and I'm going to put it on my highest mountain, Mount Zion, which is my kingdom.

And I'm going to, I'm going to plant it and it'll, it'll be exalted." So, so Jesus isn't just randomly bringing up this up in the parable. This is a motif, a theme, a type, you know? Well, it's, you know, the antitype of all these typological passages of, um, these trees, these multiple different trees in the Old Testament, you know, Psalm 1, great example. So.

Yeah. And if you notice too, that, uh, the, Jesus and Ezekiel, they're both bringing up the

same exact point that it is a lowly, uh, it's lowly, uh, it's a lowly beginnings. Yeah.

Right. So you are automatically see that, that same progressive growth over time. And the understanding that it is God who has done it.

A lot of the rhetoric against the, the post-millennial is that we, we seek to bring in the kingdom of God through legislation, um, which is not true at all. We, we recognize and indeed we say the exact same thing as Ezekiel, that it is God who has done this work. Okay.

So we're the, the post-mill is the one who's saying that Christ is the one who has all authority in heaven and on earth. And he is the one who accomplishes all of his purposes, right? So we are just mere vessels and, and, and though we are weak vessels at time, our weakness, um, manifested the power and majesty of God. Um, so this is exactly, we are not the seed.

We do not permit the growth though we plant, though we water it's God who grants the growth. So all of this is a recognition of the glory of God in this. Exactly.

Yeah. When we talk about the theology of dominion, it is Christ who has dominion. We, we now, we now conquer through him conquering.

It's not, we can't do it by ourselves. So we, we're just little tiny soldiers behind, you know, based, you know, King David, the archetype, uh, King David played of like, uh, going in with all of his mighty men. We're now Christ's mighty men rallying behind him as he mows down his enemies, you know? We merely lifted the banner of Christ.

Exactly. Yeah. And how does he do this? How does, well, in revelation, we see how he's doing this, right? With the sword that's coming out of his mouth, Jesus's words, what he taught continues to this day to tear down nations.

Because we dite the tyrants that they've transgressed God's law, Jesus's law of Liberty. Um, so, so that is how Jesus conquers by the plain clear truthful teaching. He is truth.

He is the way he is. He is the life. Right.

So his teaching, who he was, what he taught and the things he did, and most certainly him being God incarnate, he now tramples all nations under his foot. So they should, they should heat, heat this warning. So we want to make that abundantly clear.

This is Christ's work. And we work in response to what he's treading out. Um, so, so just, yeah, more, more defense of what Postmill really teaches and not, not these characters that people like to create that they think we're just everything's, everything's all good all the time.

There's never any judgment, prosperity gospel, you know, Postmill is just another version

of prosperity gospel. So that's not it at all. And then the last thing we're going to hit up as we wrap, wrap up here, just the, uh, the, the, the pair that this, uh, that this parable comes in when Jesus speaks of, uh, speaks of the leaven, the lump, the measures of flour that is put into the, put into the bread.

Uh, Jesus says that this is what the kingdom of God is like, uh, a woman that's taking, taking these, uh, this meal, this, this, you know, flour and the leaven is put into it. And then, you know, she waits, you know, needs it and waits as it rises and leavens everything. Right.

So if you've ever made bread before, this is a very clear analogy of what's going on here. You know, when the yeast eats up the gluten, you know, and then it rises because it's, it's eating it up and it creates a gas carbon dioxide. Oh, then, um, yeah.

So, so that, that, that's what's going on there. I guess that that's, that's the analogy. It has to do its work.

It has to work out the gluten in the flour and the measures of meal. Right. Yeah.

My wife is an avid maker of sourdough bread and she is constantly, uh, in the process of preparing the bread, um, with her hands. And then she lays it aside and she prepares it another way and she prepares it by patience, by waiting. Yeah.

So she'll usually get up very early in the morning. She'll start needing a bread. I don't know exactly what she does.

This is her kind of thing, but she needs the bread. She puts all the flour in and the leavening agent of her starter, um, which is the leaven. And then she sets it aside for the whole day.

And she usually comes back to it either later that evening, I think, or something else like that. Maybe the next day. So it depends on what, what she's doing, but it's always an exercise of patience.

So this again, displays the fact of what Jesus is really trying to say. It's the same thing with the wheat and the tares. Wait till the harvest, right? The seed is planted.

It's growing. Wait for the plenitude of that growth. It's, it's, it's like the leavening agent within the, within the flour.

Wait for it to leaven the lump, right? So the whole post-mill perspective here is that what is, what is the lump? It's, it's the world, right? We're wanting the world to be leavened. This is the command of Christ and the gospel that he does have all authority in heaven and on earth. And he proclaims us in that authority to declare the gospel to the nations, to everything under, under creation.

So what we're looking for is the leaven of the gospel. That's what the leaven is. We're looking for the leaven of the gospel to arise in the hearts of the people and for them to arise and to behold their God.

So that's ultimately what this post-mill hope is all about, that, that the leavening agent is the gospel. The gospel is triumphant. Exactly.

Well, and if we want to make an analogy, like, you know, Jesus is obviously making an analogy between these two parables. What is in the, in the mustard, you know, Christ is the seed that's planted and the life springs from him. What is the, you know, and he's the root, obviously, he's the root that remains, you know, and then what, what would the leaves be? What's the healing of the nations in Revelation 21? What's the, what's the, the plant, the trees that are for the healing of the nation? Well, that, that is, was it 22? I'm sorry.

Yeah, I was just going to make a stupid point and say it's marijuana. That's what all the, yeah, all the hippies say. Sorry, I can be on.

No, marijuana will set you free, dude. Dude, whatever. Now, if you're, yeah, that would be simple.

But to carry the analogy further, what is the, what's the healing of the nations? What are the, these trees planted by the river of life, which is also from Ezekiel. Which is what these things are happening in Christ is the point, you know, revelation is things that have already happened. And the healing of the nations is Bryce saying it's the, it's the gospel and it's, and the gospel doesn't go forth apart from our God working and stirring in our hearts as his ambassadors.

Like we've already talked, talked about going forth with this word, like the man in Psalm one that meditates on his law day and night. What, what is these and what it's what's it saying? Psalm one and his, it's leaf does not wither. It's leaves do not wither.

It's, it's leaves are alive and it bears fruit. What is that? That's God's law that's meditating on God's law. That's what this man is like this tree.

And an even greater way, this tree of the kingdom of God, which is a bunch of little parts, little branches, which would be us. We come as bearers of the gospel and apart from the gospel, we're not to be found in the root. Christ is the one empowering all this.

So I think that's, we need to think about the whole council of God's word here, that it's not just, the nations won't be healed apart from the gospel. Right? You can't just, you can't just a top down implement Christian morality through legislation without regenerated hearts. You'll still, you'll still have a society and disarray, although it may be lessened right from the restraint of the wall.



The true post mill sees the only vehicle, the only engine that's going to drive revival and reformation in the world is going to be the gospel of our Lord. So just to make that abundantly clear and that, that's what the yeast cells are. We are the yeast cells going out where the salt and light, we're the ones spreading with, with the gospel, with the gospel, not just Christians by themselves trying to implement God's law.

No, we proclaim the law to terrorize the hearts of those that hear and then give them the healing balm of the gospel. That's what the yeast cell does. That's what the leaves do on the tree.

I heard it put this way by a Puritan. He said that the preaching of the word of God is the chariot that drives around Christ the King throughout the world. Yeah, that's awesome.

So in Christ's glorious procession and his glorious reign over all the earth, that is the primary instrument is the preaching of God's word, the nations that drives people to himself. And that makes the nations come and bring blessings and gifts to him. That's awesome.

That's beautiful. Thanks for sharing that. Let's just honestly end on that.

That's great. So we hope that this all made sense. These, these, where Bryce and I are going to continue talking about these, these post-mill texts, these texts that show great dominion of Christ, a great ruler, a great king, and how he's going to tread out the winepress, how he's going to, how he's going to finish, finish his work, continue doing his work through us.

So we're going to keep going through these texts, these post-mill texts, and hopefully share really what post-mill people think. And yeah, articulate this clearly of what this theology of dominion is, this post-mill theology, and how it is, you know, very, very clearly and evidently taught in God's word. So thanks for listening to this week's episode of the For the King podcast.

You can check me out at [forthekeepingpodcast.com](http://forthekeepingpodcast.com) and I'm on Twitter and things like that. So you can follow me on there and let people know about the podcast. If you're enjoying it, we'd love to have more people listening to hear God's word.

So thanks so much for your time and attention for listening to Bryce and I. We appreciate it. To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, we honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Solely, dayo, glory. Glory.

[Music]

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